



LEADING TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SCHOOLS FACILITATION GUIDE

The *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module is designed for school and district administrators and other school staff helping to lead efforts to adopt a trauma-sensitive approach schoolwide. The module and companion Action Guide outline a multi-phased process for adopting a trauma-sensitive approach, including how and when to use other package components. Together, the module and Action Guide include a roadmap and tools for supporting a school to: (a) prepare to adopt a trauma-sensitive approach, (b) envision what a trauma-sensitive school will look like, (c) align trauma sensitivity with other approaches, and (d) sustain trauma sensitivity.

The *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module may be viewed independently by school leaders; however, it is recommended that school leadership teams interested in adopting a trauma-sensitive approach view and use these materials as a group. This guide includes recommendations for how to facilitate in-person group training sessions with leadership teams using the module and Action Guide.

Intended Use

The information in this guide is intended for school and district administrators and other staff, such as student services staff, who are in positions to facilitate group training sessions with school leadership using the *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module and Action Guide. This guide outlines the main sections of the module, notes approximate length of recorded narration, discussions and activities for each section, and includes suggestions for orienting the group to the Action Guide during training sessions.

Preparing to Use This Facilitation Guide

Facilitators using this guide should be familiar with the *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module and Action Guide and have a clear plan for using these materials with leadership teams. Facilitators should read through this guide and familiarize themselves with the proposed training process prior to conducting any training sessions. Depending on who is facilitating the training and how familiar the leadership team is with trauma and trauma-sensitive schools, it may be necessary to introduce leadership to the *Understanding Trauma and Its Impact* e-resource and the *Building Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module before the groups views the *Leading Trauma Sensitive Schools* component of the training package. Facilitators can refer to the [Implementation Guide](#) for additional suggestions about how and when to use the training package components depending on facilitators' roles and intentions.

LEADING TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SCHOOLS TRAINING

The *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module is best viewed in a group setting, by school administrators and other school staff who are in positions to make decisions about how the school might adopt a trauma-sensitive approach (e.g., fellow administrators; department heads; student services staff; members of other groups, such as school climate teams, leading aligning efforts). The training may be conducted in its entirety or may be broken into segments as outlined in this guide. The following outline of the module includes a brief summary of the content and approximate length of each section, along with recommendations for when to pause and discuss or refer to the Action Guide. Time estimates for each section consider the duration of the recorded narration on each slide, as well as time for discussions and activities identified in the guide. Facilitators should factor in additional time as needed for discussions and activities and to review various sections of the Action Guide during the training. (*Note.* The *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* training is likely to be conducted with a small group, because the training is targeted to leaders. In this case, the training sessions may be less formal and more discussion oriented.)

1. Welcome (approximate length of narration: 5 minutes)

- The welcome section introduces participants to the topics covered in the module and includes directions for how to use the module, intended learning objectives, and clarification of common terms used throughout the module.
- Facilitators may consider how they want to introduce the module beyond what is provided in the welcome narrative.

Note. It is recommended that facilitators allow time to complete the Introduction to Trauma and Trauma-Sensitive Schools: The Big Picture sections of the module in one training session. If leaders have already viewed the *Building Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module, the material in these sections will be a review and may not need the same level of in-depth discussion that will be required for the remaining sections.

2. Introduction to Trauma (approximate length of narration: 12 minutes / approximate length with discussion: 25 minutes)

- This section includes a brief review of what is meant by the term *trauma*; types of trauma; rates of trauma among children and adults; and examples of how trauma affects students, parents, school staff, and the school community. (*Note.* Facilitators should refer to the [Implementation Guide](#) for additional guidance on how to introduce various training package components to leaders. For example, if leaders are not familiar with basic trauma concepts, they may first want to view the *Understanding Trauma and its Impact* e-resource and the *Building Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module. This

section provides enough of an overview to ensure that everyone has some common understanding of the concepts.)

- **Slide 2.1** introduces what will be covered in the section. Facilitators should review this slide aloud with the group.
- When facilitators reach **Slide 2.5**, they may consider pausing after listening to each narrative segment related to how trauma affects students, parents, staff, and schools to ask participants to share their thoughts. ***Facilitators may need to factor in additional time for this discussion.***

3. Trauma-Sensitive Schools: The Big Picture (approximate length of narration: 10 minutes / approximate length with activity and discussion: 45 minutes)

- This section provides a brief overview of trauma sensitivity as a universal approach that requires systemic change, outlines the core principles of a trauma-sensitive approach, and distinguishes between traditional and trauma-sensitive perspectives.
- **Slide 3.1** introduces what will be covered in the section. Facilitators should review this slide aloud with the group.



Pause and Reflect: **Slide 3.5** provides an opportunity for participants to pause and reflect on the extent to which their school currently upholds the core principles of trauma sensitivity in daily practice. Facilitators may consider using the *Applying the Core Principles Worksheet* from the *Building Trauma-Sensitive Schools* component of the training package to guide this discussion. (Note. If participants have already used the worksheet as part of viewing the *Building Trauma-Sensitive Schools* online module, the worksheet may still be useful to complete and discuss from a leader perspective.) ***Facilitators may need to factor in additional time for this activity.***



Pause and Reflect: Use the questions on **Slide 3.7** to facilitate a discussion about the school's shift from a traditional to a trauma-sensitive perspective. It is useful for leaders to consider where they can learn from other efforts to shift perspective and practice and to anticipate potential barriers and challenges to change. ***Facilitators may need to factor in additional time for this activity.***

Note. This may be a good stopping point if facilitators do not have time to complete the next section related to Phase 1. Facilitators choose how they want to segment the remaining content based on time available for professional development. The remaining content is divided into four phases. It is recommended that facilitators fully complete any started phase within the same training session.

4. Phase 1: Prepare (approximate length of narration: 12 minutes / approximate length with discussion: 35 minutes)

- This section outlines steps for preparing the school to adopt a trauma-sensitive approach, including educating staff, establishing a trauma-sensitive work group, and assessing readiness for change.
- **Slide 4.1** introduces what will be covered in the section. Facilitators should review this slide aloud with the group.
- **Slides 4.7 to 4.12** include sample questions for assessing the school's motivation and capacity to adopt a trauma-sensitive approach. There are opportunities for the group members to consider questions and type in their responses. Facilitators can enter responses based on the group discussion. ***Facilitators may need to factor in additional time for this discussion.***



Pause to Refer to Action Guide: Follow the prompts on **Slide 4.13** to walk participants through pages 3–16 of the Action Guide for additional guidance on preparing the school to adopt a trauma-sensitive approach, including a readiness assessment and planning tools. (*Note.* This opportunity to pause and reflect serves as an initial orientation to this section of the Action Guide. Leadership will return to the Action Guide after the *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* training to explore next steps and begin to use the materials to develop and implement school-based plans.) ***Facilitators should factor in additional time to review this section of the Action Guide.***

5. Phase 2: Envision (approximate length of narration: 5 minutes / approximate length with discussion: 20 minutes)

- This section outlines steps for envisioning a trauma-sensitive school, including exploring the key elements of a trauma-sensitive school across 6 domains and identifying next steps for creating a plan for the school.
- **Slide 5.1** introduces what will be covered in this section. Facilitators should review this slide aloud with the group.
- **Slide 5.3** revisits the group's answers to readiness questions posed earlier in the module (**Slides 4.7–4.12**). Facilitators can revisit these answers with the group, now that the group has a more complete sense of the key elements of a trauma-sensitive school. ***Facilitators may need to factor in additional time for this discussion.***



Pause to Refer to Action Guide: Follow the prompts on **Slide 5.4** to walk participants through pages 17–49 of the Action Guide for additional guidance on envisioning a trauma-sensitive school, including tools for assessing current practice and developing trauma-sensitive action plans for each domain. (*Note.* This opportunity to pause and reflect serves as an initial orientation to this

section of the Action Guide. Leadership will return to the Action Guide after the *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* training to explore next steps and begin to use the materials to develop and implement school-based plans.) **Facilitators should factor in additional time to review this section of the Action Guide. This section of the Action Guide is the longest and may require more time to review.**

6. Phase 3: Align (approximate length of narration: 10 minutes / approximate length with discussion: 30 minutes)

- This section outlines steps for aligning trauma sensitivity with other approaches, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, restorative practices, and school emergency planning.
- **Slide 6.1** introduces what will be covered in this section. Facilitators should review this slide aloud with the group.
- Facilitators may consider pausing after **slides 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5** to discuss alignment between trauma-sensitivity and PBIS, restorative practices, and school emergency planning, particularly if the school is currently adopting any of these approaches.

Facilitators may need to factor in additional time for this discussion.



Pause to Refer to Action Guide: Follow the prompts on **Slide 6.7** to walk participants through pages 50–53 of the Action Guide for additional guidance and tools for planning for and aligning trauma sensitivity with other approaches. (Note. This opportunity to pause and reflect serves as an initial orientation to this section of the Action Guide. Leadership will return to the Action Guide after the *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* training to explore next steps and begin to use the materials to develop and implement school-based plans.) **Facilitators should factor in additional time to review this section of the Action Guide.**

7. Phase 4: Sustain (approximate length of narration: 3 minutes / approximate length of narration with discussion: 15 minutes)

- This section outlines steps for sustaining a trauma-sensitive approach, including evaluating impact, responding to changing needs, and sustaining systems change.
- **Slide 7.1** introduces what will be covered in this section. Facilitators should review this slide aloud with the group.
- Facilitators may consider pausing after **Slide 7.2** to consider how participants would evaluate the impact of adopting a trauma-sensitive approach. **Facilitators may need to factor in additional time for this discussion.**



Pause to Refer to Action Guide: Follow the prompts on **Slide 7.5** to walk participants through pages 54–58 of the Action Guide for additional guidance on

sustaining a trauma-sensitive approach. **Slide 7.5** also directs facilitators and the group to review pages 48–49, where group members can plan ahead for how they will sustain the work group, monitor progress, and evaluate impact as they develop action plans in Phase 2. (*Note.* This opportunity to pause and reflect serves as an initial orientation to this section of the Action Guide. Leadership will return to the Action Guide after the *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* training to explore next steps and begin to use the materials to develop and implement school-based plans.) ***Facilitators should factor in additional time to review this section of the Action Guide.***

8. Conclusion and Next Steps (approximate length of narration: 1 minute)

- This brief, final section includes a review of the learning objectives for the module, a link to a feedback survey about the module, and a list of resources related to the content covered in the module.
- Once the leadership team has reviewed the complete *Leading Trauma-Sensitive Schools* module and Action Guide, administrators and their colleagues will determine next steps and use the Action Guide and other training package materials to support action planning and implementation.